



MITT ROMNEY
GOVERNOR

KERRY HEALEY
LT. GOVERNOR

EDWARD A. FLYNN
SECRETARY

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety
Department of Fire Services

P.O. Box 1025 ~ State Road

Stow, Massachusetts 01775

(978) 567~3100 Fax: (978) 567~3121



STEPHEN D. COAN
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

THOMAS P. LEONARD
DEPUTY STATE FIRE MARSHAL

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For Information Contact:

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Jennifer L. Mieth
(978) 567-3381

Firefighters Complete Rigorous Professional Training

State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan is pleased to announce the graduation of the 161st Class of the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy's fifty-five day Recruit Firefighting Program on December 19, 2003. This rigorous professional training provides our newest firefighters with the basic skills to perform their jobs effectively and safely. The Massachusetts Firefighting Academy, a division of the Department of Fire Services, offers this program, tuition-free.

The forty graduates, one woman and thirty-nine men, represent the fire departments of: Auburn, Bridgewater, Burlington, Chicopee, Falmouth, Hamilton, Hingham, Holbrook, Holyoke, Hyannis, Lexington, Littleton, Malden, Methuen, Middleboro, Northampton, Somerset, Stoneham, Upton, Walpole, Watertown, West Springfield, Westfield, Whitman, and Yarmouth.

Leominster Fire Lieutenant Charles LeBlanc, who is an active Mass. Firefighting Academy instructor, and who recently received awards from both the Massachusetts State Police and the Leominster Rotary Club for his role in the April 4, 2003 crash of an airplane into an industrial building, addressed the graduating recruits.

O V E R

Administrative Services • Hazardous Materials Response
Massachusetts Firefighting Academy • Office of the State Fire Marshal

Today's Fire Department Does Much More than Fight Fires

Today's firefighters do far more than fight fires. They are the first ones called to respond to chemical and environmental emergencies ranging from the suspected presence of carbon monoxide to a gas leak. They may be called to rescue a child who has fallen through the ice or who has locked himself in a bathroom. They rescue people from stalled elevators and those who are trapped in vehicle accidents. They test and maintain their equipment, ranging from self-contained breathing apparatus to hydrants to hoses, power tools, and apparatus.

At the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy they learn all these skills and more from certified fire instructors who are also experienced firefighters. Students learn all the basic skills they need to respond to fires and to contain and control them. They are also given training in public fire education, hazardous material incident mitigation, flammable liquids, stress management, water rescue procedures, confined space rescue techniques, and rappelling. The intensive, eleven-week program for municipal firefighters involves classroom instruction, physical fitness training, firefighter skills training and live firefighting practice.

Basic Firefighter Skills

Students receive classroom training in all basic firefighter skills. They practice first under non-fire conditions and then during controlled fire conditions. To graduate, students must demonstrate proficiency in life safety, search and rescue, ladder operations, water supply, pump operation, and fire attack. Fire attack operations range from mailbox fires to multiple-floor or multiple room structural fires. Upon successful completion of the Recruit Program all students have met national standards of National Fire Protection Association 1001 and are certified to the level of Firefighter I and II by the Massachusetts Fire Training Council.